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STRESS MANAGEMENT: A SPECIAL FOCUS ON SOFTWARE EMPLOYEES IN TWIN CITIES OF HYDERABAD & SECUNDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a part of day-to-day living of every individual. The college students may experience stress in meeting the academic demands, people on the job, business men may suffer stress to reach office in time and to complete the projects on time and even the house hold ladies may experience stress in managing the home affairs and to look for the maid servant. The reasons for the stress differ from person to person. Highly complex and stress-laden workplaces present challenges to organizational leaders as they are faced with the task of managing the workforce while concurrently maintaining commitment and morale. The stress people experience should not be necessarily treated as harmful. An optimum amount of stress can always act as an energizer or motivator and propel people to apply the efforts and complete the work. But a high level of Stress can be a serious threat to the personality traits of the individual and can cause physiological and social problems. Thus the main aim of this article is to bring the level of stress in software employees in general and twin cities of secunderabad and Hyderabad, Telangana State, India, in particular. By this survey 60percent of software employees in Hyderabad under stress occasionally. Married women and single mothers in software field are facing stress to balance work life. Due to stress the software employees are facing health problems like obesity, heart problems diabetes and infertility problems for females.

KEYWORDS

Hyderabad, Secunderabad, stress, physiological problems, social problems, software employees.

INTRODUCTION

The study of human resource management is one of the major criteria in the corporate sector. Now a day the corporate sector is booming in a high speed that the people have to work for prolonged hours to maintain the standard of living and achieve their basic needs. In spite of having the modern technologies and facilities, people are feeling themselves to be work loaded and stressed. Stress arises because of many reasons some of which results from excessive pressure and environmental stimulations like work conflict, work overload, lack of social support, etc.

Highly complex and stress-laden workplaces present challenges to organizational leaders as they are faced with the task of managing the workforce while concurrently maintaining commitment and morale. Leaders themselves can often be a central source of stress among employees (Basch & Fisher, 2000; Offer Mann & Hellmann, 1996; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). As the characteristics of work change, so must the roles and tactics of modern leaders. Leaders, who promote supportive relationships, elicit motivation among subordinates, facilitate more positive and less negative emotions among subordinates, and engender more benign evaluations of stressful tasks among subordinates may be more effective than the more traditional leaders who tend toward task-directive techniques.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the factors causing stress to the employees at work in the organization
2. To know the stress management practices in software companies in Hyderabad
3. To offer suitable suggestions to the company to improve stress management practice of the company.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hans Selye (1973).) Stress is the body's nonspecific response to a demand placed on it. Richard S. Lazarus (1966) Stress as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that —demands exceed the Personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize; Darshan et al (2009) observed that the software employees are professionally stressed and are at 10 times higher risk for developing depression and also significantly increase the incidence of psychiatric disorders. Preventive strategies like training in stress management, frequent screening to identify professional stress and depression at the initial stages and addressing these issues adequately might help the software professionals cope with their profession better without affecting their lifestyle and health. Jakkula Rao and Chandraiah (2011) found that job satisfaction and mental health are correlated but not significant. However, job satisfaction was positively and significantly correlated with coping behavior. The mental health is negatively and significantly correlated with occupational stress. It can be explained that as job satisfaction and mental health increases coping behavior increases. And as stress increases mental health decreases. Stress may be referred to as an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal that people experience in situations that they perceive as dangerous or threatening to their well-being. Stress is defined as a nonspecific response of the body to a stimulus or event (stressor). Under a general model of the stress response, when an individual experiences a stressor, the stressor will lead to a physiological response, one that can be measured by several indicators, such as elevated heart rate Transactional model of stress championed by Richard Lazarus and his colleagues (Holroyd & Lazarus, 1982; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) - A theory that proposes that the experience of stress depends on one's subjective appraisal of events. Thus, stress is neither a stimulus nor a response but a stimulus-response transaction.

Companies have realized the usefulness of anti-stress programs by looking at the reduction of medical costs for their employees. The latest programs of this kind are the so-called "wellness programs" designed to take care of the physical and psychological aspect of the employee. They may include giving up smoking and alcohol seminars, losing weight and healthy diets, exercise programs. One such program was developed by health Weimar Institute in California and named after an ingenious **NEW START** (also valued a symbol) memo-technical formula. The initials designate the factors considered adorable for the subject's eager to control their way of life in a direction that would prepare the body able to allow a reduction in multiple daily stressors. Thus the initials mean the following:

N- Nutrition (food), **E**- Exercise (physical effort for "clearing the mind"), **W**- Water (daily consumption of more than 2 liters of water), **S**- Sun (sun, judicious exposure to sunlight), **T**- Temperance (moderation, including periods of employment adjustment/ relaxation), **A**- Air (fresh air), **R**- Rest (sleep and relaxation including weekends) and **T**- Trust (social support, trusting somebody).

Indian employers rank stress —According to the inaugural Asia Pacific edition of the Stayin @Work survey conducted by global professional services company Towers Watson, Stress is the number one lifestyle risk factor, ranking above physical inactivity and obesity. While Indian employers lead their regional counterparts in developing strategies to manage work-related stress, only 38% identified improving the emotional/mental health of employees (i.e. lessening the stress and anxiety) as a top priority of their health and productivity programs. This signals a vast scope for improvement in strategic initiatives aimed at tackling stress among Indian employees.

FIG. 1

In India, as well as regionally and globally, stress was ranked across the region as the most pressing lifestyle risk factor

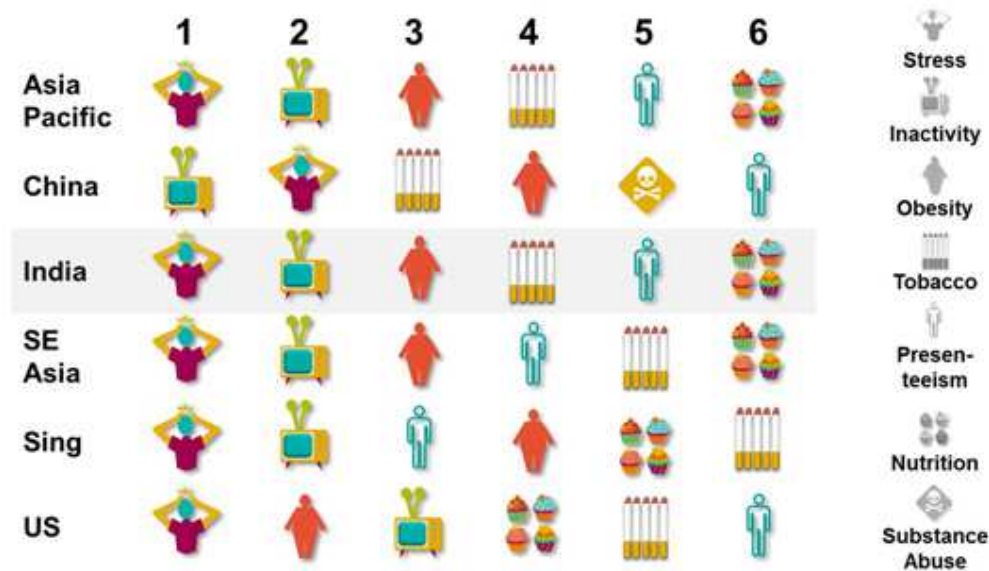


TABLE 1: TOP 10 STEPS TAKEN BY EMPLOYERS TO MANAGE STRESS

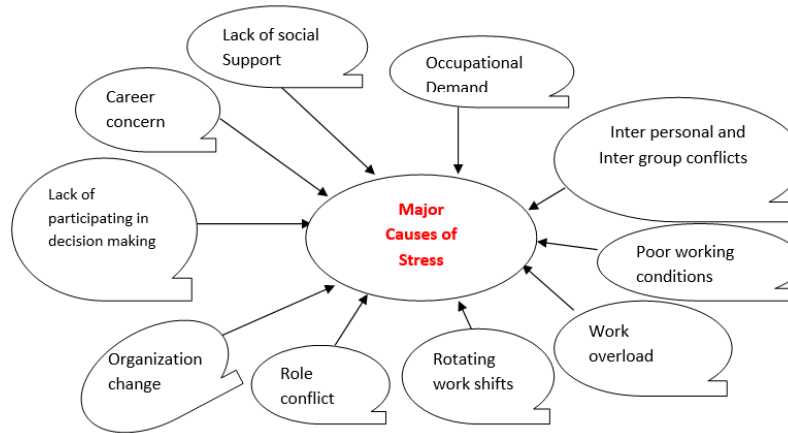
	India	Asia Pacific	United States	EMEA
Flexible working options	50%	40%	51%	50%
Stress mgmt interventions (e.g., workshops, yoga, tai chi)	43%	38%	39%	16%
Education and awareness campaigns	41%	41%	40%	26%
Promotion of employee assistance program (EAP)	40%	24%	85%	29%
Specialized training for employees	30%	26%	23%	39%
Training for managers	23%	24%	34%	41%
External resources used to design and deliver program(s)	16%	12%	23%	18%
Expanding EAP and other services to dependents	15%	10%	46%	25%
Anti-stress space	12%	10%	10%	4%
Written guidelines on stress	10%	9%	7%	9%

Source: Indian employers rank stress as #1 lifestyle risk factor: Towers Watson report May 6, 2014 India

Scientifically Proven Ways to Reduce Stress at Work Martha C. White (2014) stated the stress reduction techniques such as Sit up straight; get organized, Abandon unrealistic goals, Try to avoid interruptions, and Embrace your stress. Henrik Edberg (2014) identified stress reduction ways such as. One thing at a time; Write everything down.; Keep your daily to-do list very short; don't make mountains out of molehills. ; Spend 80% of your time focusing on a solution; Ask instead of guessing. Pack your bag before you go to sleep; Balance fully focused work with complete rest; Set clear boundaries for your day; Disconnect over the weekend. Make sure you take time to do what you love to do. Delegate; Eliminate; Be 10 minutes early; Stay on track by asking yourself questions every day; Let your lunch be a slow time of relaxing; Keep a very simple workspace; Build a zone of few distractions for your work hours; Get to done with something that stressed or bothers you; If it does not get done then there is a day tomorrow too; Everything in its place; Check your email etc. just once and as late in the workday as possible. Limit your daily information intake; Listen to yourself; be here; Stop trying to do things perfectly; Ask for help.; Talk it out with someone; Zoom out; Slow down; Tell yourself: Just take care of today; Just breathe; Be smart about the three fundamentals of energy

MAJOR CAUSES OF STRESS

FIG. 2
Major Causes of Stress



Nupur Amarnath, (2011) Organizations such as Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Art of Living, Swami Sukhabodhananda's Prasanna Trust, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's Isha Foundation or Yogi Ashwini's Dhyana Foundation are stepping into the corporate training zone to improve the spiritual quotient (SQ) at the workplace. So get ready for Om in the office, breathing breaks replacing cigarette breaks and a meditation-cum-conference room. Companies are lapping it up. After the Future group created history of sorts by bringing in the world's first chief belief officer Devdutt Pattanaik, companies want to now seep spirituality right to their lowest common denominator. After a session with Art of Living's corporate module Apex, electrical equipment maker Crompton Greaves now plans to open a yoga room at all its 22 locations within India and 18 outside. Indraprastha Gas plans to sponsor its executives regularly for the Inner Engineering course by Isha Foundation. Technology firm Capgemini, which started Apex for its women members in Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata, wants to extend it to all workers. GMR believes that SQ is important to be a better person and in consequence a better worker.

DATA COLLECTION

The data is collected through the research (Questionnaire) comprising the questions on stress management, from the employees of software companies existing in twin cities of Secunderabad and Hyderabad in state of Telangana India the sample size is confirmed to 100 employees for this study.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION (Demographical Data Analysis)

1. AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE

Age in Years	Number of respondents	Percentage
(21-30)	30	30
(31-40)	25	25
(41-50)	30	30
50 and above	15	15

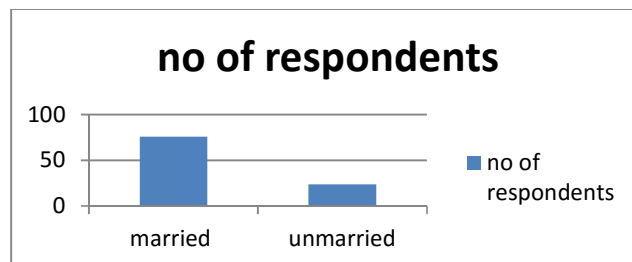
Interpretation: The above chart explains that the according to the survey 30% of the employees are age in between 21-30, 25% of employees are in between 31-40, 30% of employees are in between 41-50 and 15% of employees are above 50 age

2. GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES

Gender	No of respondents	Percentage
Male	69	69
Female	31	31

Interpretation: The above chart indicates that 69 male and 31 female respondents are there in this study

3. ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS OF THE EMPLOYEES



Interpretation: The above chart explains that married employees are 76% and unmarried are 24 %

4. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE EMPLOYEES

Educational Qualification	No of respondents	Percentage
PG	44	44
UG	36	36
Others	20	20

Interpretation: The chart explains the education qualification of employees for the study. In this study 44 employees are post graduates and 36 under graduates and remaining are more qualified.

5. SOFTWARE EMPLOYEES NATURE OF JOB IN HYDERABAD

Nature of the job	No.of respondents	Percentage
Permanent	79	79
Temporary	21	21

Interpretation: From the analysis 79 are Permanent and 21 are temporary employees for this study

6. EXPERIENCE IN THE PRESENT COMPANY

Experience	No of respondents	Percentage
Less than 2 years	20	20
2-5 years	40	40
5-7 years	30	30
Greater than 7 years	10	10

Interpretation: It is evident from the analysis that less than 2 yr 20% of employees, 3-5 years 40%,5-7yrs 30% and greater than 7 yrs are 10% having experience in the company

7. INCOME LEVEL OF THE EMPLOYEES

Income level	No of respondents	Percentage
Below 25000	30	30
25000-35000	40	40
35000-45000	20	20
45000 and above	10	10

Interpretation: The above chart explain that 30% of employees are below 25,000, 40% are in between 25-35 k, 20% are in between 35-45k and only 10% employees are above 45k.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION (According to the study)

1. DO YOU FEEL LIKE STRESS IN YOUR JOB?

Parameters	No of respondents	Percentage
Always	20	20
Sometimes	60	60
Never	20	20

Interpretation: From the above chart it explains that 20% of employees are always under stress and 60% of employees are feel stress sometime due to situations and 20% are never under stress.

2. WHAT MAY CAUSES STRESS ON YOUR JOB?

Workers characteristics	No of respondents	Percentage
Social support	30	30
Other conditions (Type A)		
Competitiveness	20	20
Time urgency	10	10
Hostility	10	10
(Type B)		
Moderate Ambitiousness	10	10
Working conditions	10	10
Focus on quality	10	10

Interpretation: The result from the above fig shows the cause of stress on software employees. 40% of type A conditions like Competitiveness, Time urgency, Hostility. And 30% of type B conditions like Moderate Ambitiousness, working conditions, focus on quality. And 30% of social support.

3. WORKING CONDITIONS

Working conditions	No of respondents	Percentage
Lack of control	30	30
Time/deadline pressure	20	20
Poor relationship	10	10
Lack of communication	20	20
Work overload	20	20

Interpretation: Working conditions of the software employees and stress. It shows that due to lack of control 30% of employees are under stress, 20% of Time/deadline pressure, 10% Poor relationship, 20% Lack of communication, 20% Work overload

4. JOB CONDITIONS

Job conditions	No of respondents	Percentage
Design of the task	20	20
Management task	20	20
Interpersonal relationship	40	40
Work roles	10	10
Career concerns	10	10

Interpretation: The chart explains the internal factors effect on employee performance due to stress. 20% of Design of the task, 20% of Management task,40% of Interpersonal relationship and 10% Career concerns

5. DOES A SHORT BREAK DURING THE WORKING HOURS HELP TO REDUCE STRESS?

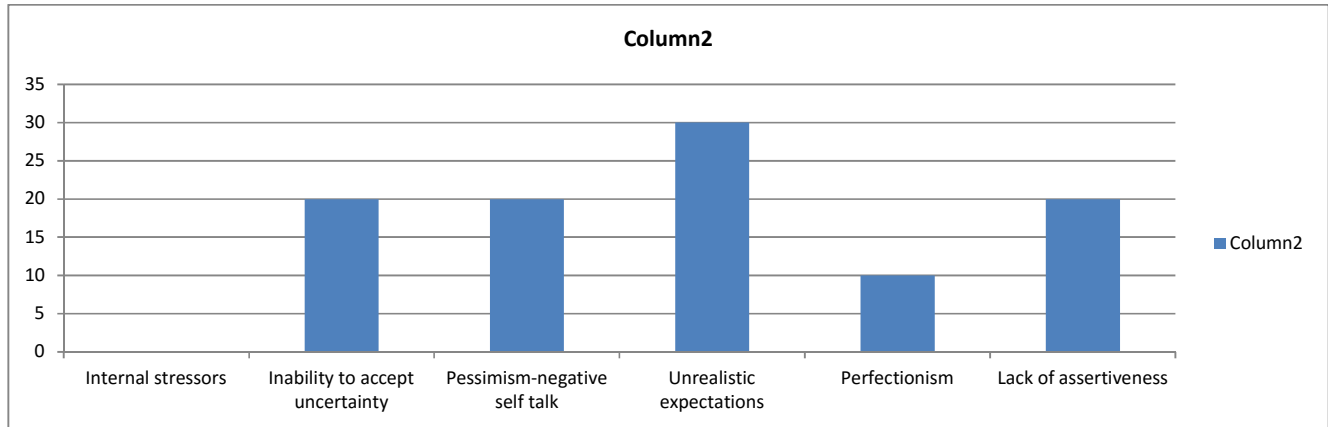
Parameters	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	60
Agree	20	20
Neutral	20	20
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0

Interpretation: 60% of employees are strongly agree that they need Short Break to reduce stress, 20% agree and 20% neutral

6. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STRESSORS THAT CREATE STRESS TO AN INDIVIDUAL

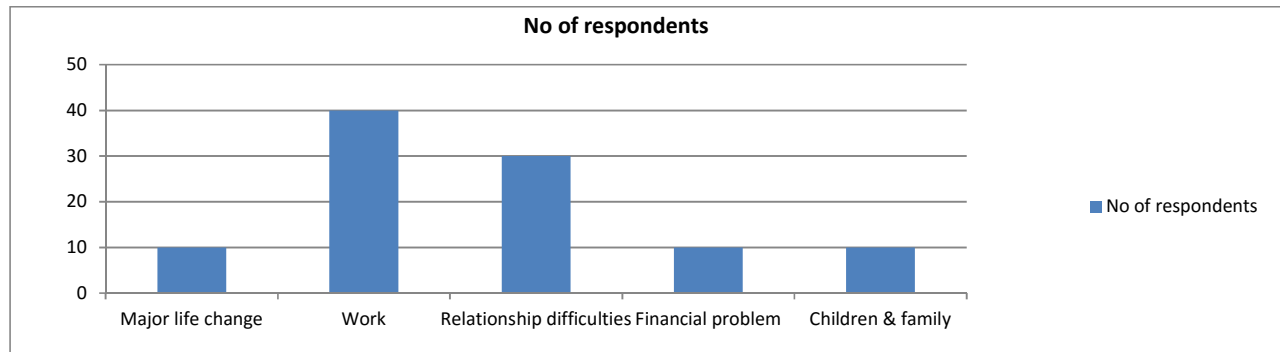
Internal stressors	No of respondents	Percentage	External stressors	No of respondents	Percentage
Inability to accept uncertainty	20	20	Major life change	10	10
Pessimism-negative self talk	20	20	Work	40	40
Unrealistic expectations	30	30	Relationship difficulties	30	30
Perfectionism	10	10	Financial problem	10	10
Lack of assertiveness	20	20	Children & family	10	10

INTERNAL STRESSORS



Interpretation: Internal stressors are 20% due to Inability to accept uncertainty, 20% Pessimism-negative self talk, 30% Unrealistic expectations, 10% Perfectionism, 20% of Lack of assertiveness

EXTERNALSTRESSORS



Interpretation: External stressors are 10% due Major life change, 40% of Work, 30 % of Relationship difficulties, 10% financial and 10 % children problems are external stress of software employees

7. DO YOU FEEL STRESS CAUSES PROBLEMS?

Problems	No of respondents	Percentage
Health Problems	50	50
Physical problems	30	30
Psychological effects	10	10
Burnout	10	10

Interpretation: Software employees face problems 50% of Health problems, 30% of Physical problems and 10 % Psychological effects and 10% burnout

8. DOES FINANCIAL MOTIVATION REDUCE THE STRESS?

Parameters	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	30	30
Agree	40	40
Neutral	10	10
Strongly disagree	10	10
disagree	10	10

Interpretation: 30% of employees are strongly agree that Financial motivation can reduce the stress, 40% agree, 10 % neutral, 10% strongly disagree and 10 % disagree.

9. DOES THE ORGANIZATION PROVIDE YOU ANY INCENTIVES AND EXTRA BENEFITS TO OVERCOME STRESS?

Options	No. of respondents	Percentage
To large extent	10	10
To some extent	70	70
Not at all	20	20
No idea	00	00

Interpretation: if organization provide Incentives and extra benefits 10% of employees are agree to overcome stress to large extent, 70% to some extent, and 20% to not at all.

10. BY YOUR COLLEAGUE SUPPORT WHILE WORK IN THE ORGANIZATION REDUCE STRESS?

Options	No. of respondents	Percentage
To large extend	30	30
To some extend	60	60
Not at all	10	10
No idea	0	0

Interpretations: Support of colleague to reduce stress in work, 30% To large extend, 60% To some extent and 10% to not at all

11. SORT OF STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME OR TECHNIQUES ARE FOLLOWED BY SOFTWARE COMPANIES IN HYDERABAD?

Individual related	No of respondents	Percentage
Meditation	60	60
Yoga	20	20
Physical fitness	20	20

Interpretation: Techniques to reduce stress b, 60% of employees opt Meditation, 20% Yoga and 20% Physical fitness

12. JOB RELATED STRESS PROGRAM

Job related	No of respondents	Percentage
Job rotation	40	40
Job enlargement	40	40
Job enrichment	20	20

Interpretation: Job related stress program at work area 40% of employees agree that job rotation program can reduce stress, 40 % Job enlargement and 20 % of job enrichment

13. ORGANIZATIONAL RELATED STRESS PROGRAM

Organizational related	No of respondents	Percentage
Training & development	50	50
Employee assessment program	50	50

Interpretation: 50% Employees are feeling that Training & development and Employee assessment program conducted by Organizational can reduce stress

14. DO YOU SATISFY THE PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY ORGANIZATIONS?

Options	No. of respondents	Percentage
To large extend	40	40
To some extend	50	50
Not at all	10	10
No idea	0	0

Interpretation: 40% of employees are satisfied by programs conducted by organization to reduce stress to large extent, 50% to some extent and 10 % to not at all

FINDINGS

1. By this survey 60 % of software employees in Hyderabad under stress occasionally.
2. Married women and single mothers in software field are facing stress to balance work life.
3. Due to stress the software employees are facing health problems like obesity, heart problems diabetes and infertility problems for females.
4. Major causes for stress are inability to accept uncertainty, Rotating work shifts, and work over load and organizational change.
5. Majority of employees feel that meditation can reduce the stress.
6. By the colleagues support the software employees can reduce stress.

SUGGESTIONS

1. As the employees are facing stress due to lack of communication and poor relationship the organizations should implement teamwork and interpersonal skill development.
2. Organizations should create supportive climate so that employees can feel secure and show their abilities to work more
3. The management should provide the following programs to reduce stress:
 - a. Relaxation programs such as arrangement of outdoor games, outing for employees, employee engagement activities
 - b. Positive attitude towards work or responsibility
 - c. Self assessment programs
 - d. Time management

CONCLUSION

Stress is a part of day-to-day living of every individual; a high level of Stress can be a serious threat to the personality traits of the Individual and can cause physiological and social problems. Much of the stress at work is caused not only by work overload and time pressure but also by lack of recognition in the organization. The organizations should design programs to take care of the physical and psychological aspect of the employee. The organization would make more revenue from the employees if they are able to manage the stress among the employees as well as employee retention

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